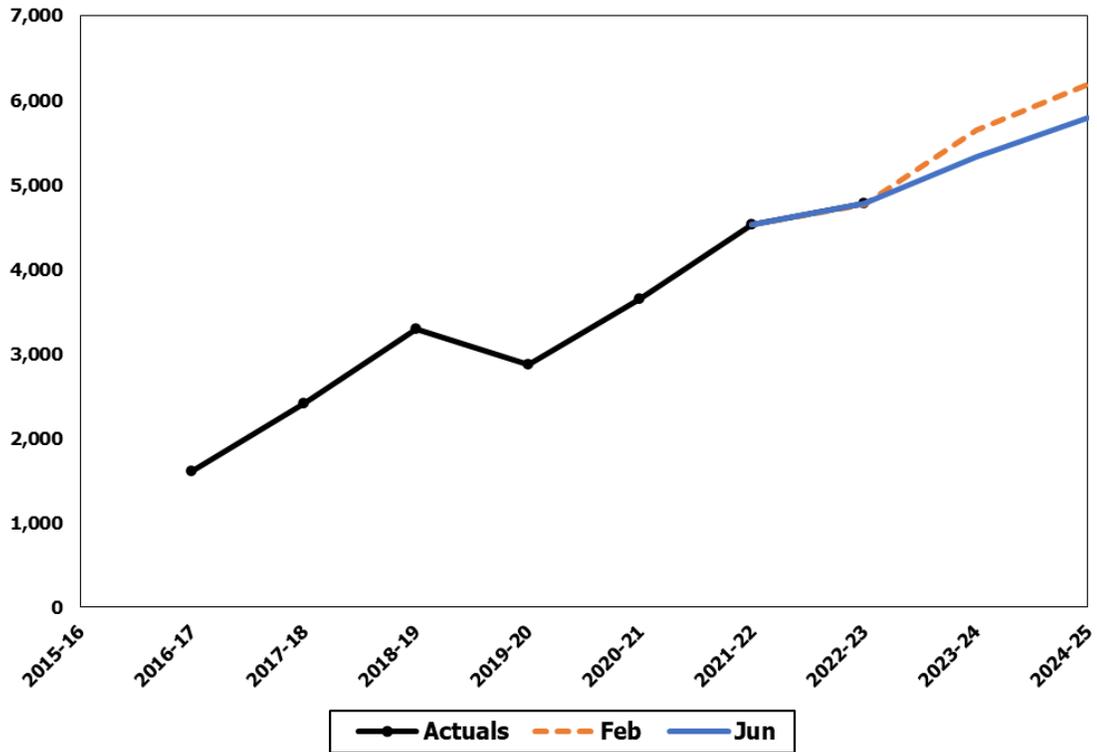


Charter Schools Average Annual Enrollment (FTE)



The charter school forecast includes grade-level enrollments, special education, and bilingual education. The CFC’s current charter school forecast dates to the 2016 legislative session, when ESSB 6194 re-established charter schools as an educational system operating separately from the common school system. The Washington State Charter School Commission (WA CSC) and the Spokane School District (SSD) are the only approved authorizers of charter schools.

Forecast Comparisons (Academic Year Averages)

| Academic Year | Feb-23 Forecast | Jun-23 Forecast | Feb to Jun Difference | Percent Difference |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 2023 | 4,769 | 4,771 | 2 | 0.0% |
| 2024 | 5,646 | 5,327 | -320 | -5.7% |
| 2025 | 6,187 | 5,783 | -404 | -6.5% |

Compared to February, the June 2023 forecast is on par for academic year 2022-23 and 362 cases or 6.1 percent lower for the 2023-25 Biennium.

Tracking the Current Forecast

| Month | Feb-23 | | | Percent |
|--------|----------|--------|----------|----------|
| | Forecast | Actual | Variance | Variance |
| Feb-23 | 4,705 | 4,746 | 40 | 0.9% |
| Mar-23 | 4,698 | 4,738 | 41 | 0.9% |
| Apr-23 | 4,664 | 4,711 | 47 | 1.0% |
| May-23 | 4,631 | 4,704 | 72 | 1.6% |

Actuals are tracking, on average, 50 cases or 1.1 percent above the February forecast.

Academic Year Caseload Change

| Academic Year | Caseload | Change from Prior Year | Percent Change |
|---------------|----------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 2015-16 | | | |
| 2016-17 | 1,603 | 1,603 | |
| 2017-18 | 2,408 | 804 | 50.2% |
| 2018-19 | 3,286 | 878 | 36.5% |
| 2019-20 | 2,866 | -420 | -12.8% |
| 2020-21 | 3,644 | 779 | 27.2% |
| 2021-22 | 4,520 | 876 | 24.0% |
| 2022-23 | 4,771 | 251 | 5.6% |
| 2023-24 | 5,327 | 556 | 11.6% |
| 2024-25 | 5,783 | 456 | 8.6% |

Charter schools are still in an implementation and growth period in Washington State. The enrollment initially grew through 2018-19, then declined in 2019-20 due to the closure of four charter schools. Enrollment then grew an average of 26 percent in 2020-21 and 2021-22 as eight new schools opened during this period.

Overall growth for 2022-23 slowed as enrollment came in lower than forecast, particularly in high schools. Growth will be higher in 2023-24 and 2024-25. Two schools are scheduled to open in 2023-24, with plans to serve 215 students. A secondary charter school was approved to expand into elementary, adding 50 students in 2024-25. Additionally, schools that opened in 2020-21 and 2021-22 also plan to continue to add grade levels, increasing their enrollment.

The legislature passed HB 1550 during the 2023 session, codifying and renaming the Transitional Kindergarten (TK) program the Transition to Kindergarten (TTK) program. Under the new law, as of the 2023-24 school year, TTK students will no longer be included in kindergarten enrollment and will be reported separately. This removes nearly 288 children from the Charter Schools forecast.

Risks to the Forecast

The risks to the charter school forecast are high. New schools vary in their success rates of enrollment and scale-up. Another risk is overly optimistic enrollment and expansion plans from authorized charter schools.

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